

Message Text

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PAGE 01 TRIPOL 01102 160725Z

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ACTION NEA-10

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R 151328Z AUG 76
FM AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3569
INFO AMEMBASSY ALGIERS
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY TUNIS
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY VALLETTA

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PFOR, LY, EG
SUBJ: LIBYAN-EGYPTIAN RELATIONS

REF: TRIPOLI 1014

SUMMARY: UNRELENTING LARG PROPAGANDA BARRAGES, LAR
ASU MEETINGS SUGGEST QADHAFI WILL, AS THREATENED, BREAK
RELATIONS WITH EGYPT SEPT. 1, DISCUSS POSSIBLE WAR.
END SUMMARY.

1. SINCE COL. QADHAFI'S THREAT JULY 23, TO SEVER
DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH SADAT'S REGIME, LARG CONTROLLED
MEDIA HAS UNRELENTINGLY ATTACKED EGYPTIAN PRESIDENT.
WHEREAS PRIOR TO COL. QADHAFI'S JULY 23, SPEECH MEDIA
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PAGE 02 TRIPOL 01102 160725Z

REFRAINED FROM BERBAL ATTACKS ON SADAT'S PERSON,

PRESENT SLANDEROUS EFFORTS BORDER ON CHARACTER ASSASSINATION. SADAT IS INTERMITTENTLY DESCRIBED BY MEDIA AS EGYPTIAN KHEDEVE AND HASHISH DRUG ADDICT. LOCAL PRESS IN PAST TWO WEEKS HAS DEVOTED MORE THAN HALF OF ITS ARTICLES AND COMMENTARIES TO DEBUNKING SADAT.

2. QADHAFI HAS REPORTEDLY ORDERED AN INCREASE IN PROPAGANDA ATTACKS ON SADAT'S ALLEGED CORRUPTION AND COLLUSION WITH U.S. IN SINAI. QADHAFI REPORTEDLY PLANS TO BROADCAST MONITORED TELEPHONE CONVERSATIONS OF SADAT THAT PURPORTEDLY WILL SUBSTANTIATE LAR MEDIA CLAIMS. EMB OFF HAS ALSO WITNESSED VERBAL ATTACKS UPON SADAT BROADCASTED FROM SOUND TRUCKS IN TRIPOLI.

3. ORCHESTRATION OF BOMBASTIC RANTING AGAINST SADAT IS ALSO CURRENTLY EMANATING FROM "POPULAR CONFERENCES" OF LAR ASU CURRENTLY BEING HELD THROUGHOUT COUNTRY. QADHAFI CONVENED CONFERENCES TO "DISCUSS" EGYPTIAN MEDIA ATTACKS UPON "GREAT 1ST OF SEPTEMBER REVOLUTION." ASU STATEMENTS ISSUING FROM MEETINGS HAVE ALREADY CONDEMNED SADAT. TV BROADCASTS OF MEETINGS REFLECT SOMBER MOOD OF MEMBERS WHO DISCUSSED EGYPTIAN MILITARY ON BORDER AND A POSSIBLE EGYPTIAN ATTACK ON LIBYA. SADAT'S REGIME WAS CONSTANTLY ACCUSED BY LOCAL ASU MEMBERS OF UNDOING ABDEL NASSER'S SOCIAL REFORMS IN EGYPT. SPEAKERS STRESSED POINT THAT DESPITE DIFFERENCES OF TWO GOVERNMENTS AND A POSSIBLE BREAK IN RELATIONS THEY CONSIDERED EGYPTIAN AND LIBYAN PEOPLE ONE, WITH ONE ORIGIN AND ONE RELIGION. COMMENT: ASU MEETING CALLED BY QADHAFI DESIGNED TO GIVE SEMBLANCE OF POPULAR WILL OF LIBYANS AND THEREBY EXONERATE HIM FROM RESPONSIBILITY FOR DECISION TO BREAK RELATIONS. PRESENT POLITICAL CLIMATE OF RELATIONS BETWEEN TWO COUNTRIES SUGGESTS QADHAFI WILL EXECUTE JULY 23 THREAT. EGYPTIAN COLLEAGUE INDICATED HIS GOVERNMENT ANTICIPATES BREAK AND THEREFORE RECENTLY APPOINTED HEAD OF EGYPTIAN RELATIONS OFFICE IN TRIPOLI WHO WAS DUE HERE WEEKS AGO, ARRIVAL IN TRIPOLI WILL DEPEND ON CONTENTS ON QADHAFI'S SEPT. 1 SPEECH.

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PAGE 03 TRIPOL 01102 160725Z

CONSEQUENCES OF SEVERING RELATIONS FOR LAR HOWEVER MAY NOT BE AS DIRE AS CLIMATE SUGGESTS. QADHAFI CAN ILL AFFORD TO EXPEL MORE THAN SYMBOLIC NUMBER OF EGYPTIAN WORKERS WITH MARGINAL SKILLS NEEDED IN LIBYAN ECONOMY. HOWEVER, QADHAFI'S PRESENT ATTITUDE TOWARDS SADAT SUGGESTS HE WILL CONTINUE TO SPONSOR SUBVERSIVE AND TERRORIST ACTIVITIES IN AN ATTEMPT TO CREATE POPULAR UNREST BY EXPLOITING EGYPT'S DOMESTIC

PROBLEMS AND THUS FORCE AN OVERTHROW OF SADAT'S
REGIME.
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